South Nottingham College

THE FURTHER EDUCATION
FUNDING COUNCIL

The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) has a statutory duty to ensure that there are satisfactory arrangements to assess the quality of provision in the further education sector. It discharges the duty in part through its inspectorate, which reports on each college in the sector every four years. The Council's inspectorate also assesses and reports on a national basis on specific curriculum areas and advises the Council's quality assessment committee.

College inspections involve both full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have specialist knowledge and experience in the areas they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member from outside the world of education and a nominated member of staff from the college being inspected.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are described in the Council Circular 93/28. In the course of inspecting colleges, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Assessments are set out in their reports. They also summarise their judgements on the balance between strengths and weaknesses using a five-point scale. Each grade on the scale has the following descriptor:

- *grade 1 – provision which has many strengths and very few weaknesses*
- *grade 2 – provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- *grade 3 – provision with a balance of strengths and weaknesses*
- *grade 4 – provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- *grade 5 – provision which has many weaknesses and very few strengths.*

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FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 09/94

SOUTH NOTTINGHAM COLLEGE
EAST MIDLANDS REGION
Inspected September-December 1993

Summary

South Nottingham College provides a range of further education courses to serve the city of Nottingham and south Nottinghamshire. It successfully attracts many students from the Asian community which regards the college as strongly supportive. The college is responsive to the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are effective links with the Greater Nottingham Training and Enterprise Council, the local education authority, higher education institutions, some employers and some local schools. Students benefit from the teaching of well-qualified and experienced lecturers and sound systems of support and guidance. They generally achieve satisfactory standards: in 1993, there were good success rates for students on their final year of study for national diplomas and at GCSE. The college has well-established procedures for course review and has successfully implemented a programme of staff-development entitlements. The college should clarify the roles of managers and co-ordinators, develop and extend the use of management information systems, define more closely the targets for its course teams and improve the internal review of its quality procedures. It should also integrate more effectively the various elements of learning support, develop a plan for upgrading equipment, improve accommodation where it adversely affects standards of work and extend its range of industrial and commercial links.

The grades awarded as a result of the inspection are given below.

Aspects of cross-college provision	Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision	2
Governance and management	3
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	3
Resources	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Art & design, media & print	3	Learning support	2
Business, management & professional studies	3	Mathematics	3
Care	3	Office & secretarial studies	3
Computing	2	Physics	3
English & communication studies	3	Psychology & sociology	3
History	2		

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1   South Nottingham College, Nottinghamshire, was inspected during the autumn term 1993. Nine inspectors visited the college for 50 inspector days between 14 September and 3 December. They observed 125 learning sessions, attended by approximately 1,500 students, and examined samples of students' written work. Discussions took place with college governors, college managers, staff and students and with representatives of local industry, the local community and the Greater Nottingham Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). The inspection team also examined a wide range of documentation including committee minutes.

2   The inspection was carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. The framework describes a four-year inspection cycle. When this cycle becomes fully established, colleges will have the opportunity to respond to the findings of earlier inspection visits before their quadrennial inspection and the subsequent published report. As this inspection occurred early in the cycle, the opportunity for such a response was not available.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

3   The college is situated in the Rushcliffe district of Nottinghamshire, in the south-west outskirts of Greater Nottingham, four miles from the city centre. The college has two main locations at West Bridgford and Clifton. The Charnwood Centre at Clifton, which houses printing, art and design and communication, is a fifteen minute drive from West Bridgford. At West Bridgford there are two sites, fifteen minutes walking distance apart: the Denton Centre houses the caring courses; the Greythorn Drive site is used for most of the remaining college provision and also houses the main library, student facilities and the college administration. Adult education and English as a second language (ESOL) are located in various buildings across the south of the city and the county.

4   There are approximately 1,400 students on full-time or sandwich courses and 3,200 on part-time courses. Enrolments for 1993-94 total over 2,000 full-time equivalents. Figure 1 shows actual and full-time equivalent enrolments by mode of study, together with the college's recruitment targets. The college employs 115 full-time teachers and 78 full-time support staff. A staff profile is given in figure 2.

5   The college is organised into 10 schools: printing, media and communication studies, art and design, office and secretarial skills, business studies, mathematics and computing, sciences, learning support, adult vocational education, humanities and social science. The inspection focused on eleven subject areas within the provision offered by the schools. Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figure 3.

6   The college is one of eight further education colleges in the Nottingham conurbation. There are five general further education colleges, a tertiary college and two sixth form colleges. All local schools have sixth

forms and the college shares its campus with one of them. The college attracts post-16 students from over 80 secondary schools across the city and the southern part of the county.

7   Nottingham city and Rushcliffe have a combined population of approximately 390,000. Local employment opportunities include clerical, professional, financial, personal and technical services. There is little manufacturing industry in the areas adjacent to the college although agriculture is predominant in the rural parts of Rushcliffe. Unemployment in the city is 18.4 per cent and in Nottinghamshire as a whole it is 12.8 per cent.

8   The college's mission is set out in its strategic plan. In summary, the college is dedicated to satisfying the present and future education and training needs of individuals as well as the whole community.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

9   The college is reviewing its provision to take account of the national targets for education and training. It recognises the need to develop more varied modes of attendance for students. It also plans to widen access by modularising the curriculum, extending facilities for open and independent learning and introducing opportunities for students to construct individual learning programmes.

10   Within Nottingham, each of the further education colleges has traditionally specialised in particular aspects of the vocational curriculum as well as providing broad programmes of general education. South Nottingham College is a specialist centre for art and design, printing, photography and media studies. It is also a designated regional centre for specialist support for students with learning difficulties. In addition to these areas, the college offers provision for business and professional studies, mathematics, computing, information technology, science, pre-nursing and care, secretarial studies, pre-vocational studies, General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). The community education programme is one of the largest in the region.

11   There is an appropriate range of academic and vocational courses to meet the needs of potential clients and there are good routes for students to progress from one level of study to another in all curriculum areas. A National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in care operates in a flexible and innovative manner. NVQs are also offered in business administration and management. In other areas NVQ activity is minimal. The development of General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) programmes has to be accelerated if the college is to achieve start dates in 1994.

12   There is discrete provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, where possible, they are integrated into the mainstream college provision and exposed to similar levels of challenge and expectation as other students. There is specific and effective assistance

for hearing-impaired students. Staff-development opportunities are created for those involved in teaching mainstream courses who need training in how to organise work for students with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities.

13   The college is increasing its range of part-time vocational courses. There are also initiatives to develop short, full-cost courses such as assessor training and to offer a consultancy service for developing NVQ assessment in the work place.

14   Where the college has developed links with local industry, these are good. The college's regional centre for printing, for example, is a focal point for local industry. There are active, supportive advisory committees in some curriculum areas, including computing, which are used to develop employer links for sponsorship, to arrange work experience and to provide assistance with assessment and course evaluation. In other curriculum areas, there are problems in attracting appropriate representatives of industry who can regularly attend meetings. The college should strive to improve employer involvement, particularly in the schools of business studies, and office and secretarial skills.

15   The college is not as systematic as it might be in identifying local employers' training needs or in measuring employers' levels of satisfaction with the services it offers.

16   Levels of co-operation and liaison with local schools are uneven. Good examples of collaboration include a franchise agreement with a local community college to offer a first award, co-operation over the provision of subjects at GCE A level, membership of the local Technical Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) cluster and collaborative provision of Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) GNVQ courses. The college/schools liaison co-ordinator regularly attends careers conventions and information events and works with schools to ensure that school leavers receive appropriate advice and guidance on the possibilities for further education and training.

17   The college has been awarded a contract by the local education authority (LEA) for the provision of an extensive adult education programme. LEA consultants are used to support a variety of college developments and the college also finds the forum for adult basic education in the city, established by the LEA, a useful venue for exchanging information and co-ordinating support for adult learners.

18   There are few formal links with other further education institutions although the college is currently exploring a number of possibilities for developing higher education provision in partnership with higher education institutions. The associate college status agreed with Nottingham Trent University is leading to the development of franchised higher education courses.

19   The college enjoys good operational links with the Greater Nottingham Training and Enterprise Council. It has been successful in securing a number of projects funded by the TEC and is now monitoring

work-related further education much more effectively than it has done in the past.

20   The college has put considerable effort into developing good relations with the Asian community in Nottingham who regard the college as strongly supportive. As a result, students from the community often travel considerable distances to study at the college.

21   There is no overall marketing strategy which links recruitment to college targets. The college has started to review the demand for its existing courses and to assess the demand for new ones although it has yet to develop an effective information base which will enable it to take realistic decisions about future developments.

22   The college takes positive action to create opportunities for groups traditionally under-represented in further education. There are access to further education courses for adult students, and provision, for example in computing, which is specifically targeted at areas of work where the proportion of female students is generally small.   An equal opportunities co-ordinator works with staff and students to develop programmes of action on gender, race and disability.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

23   The governing body has 17 members representing a broad cross-section of the local industrial, commercial, technical and community interests which reflect the work of the college. Eleven of the members are senior managers from industry, higher education, the local TEC and the professional, technical and caring sectors. The other six include the principal, representatives of the college staff and students, organisations for people with disabilities and the local community. Members of the corporation show a high degree of commitment to the college. Meetings are well attended and agenda items are thoroughly documented. The committee structure appears appropriate to the needs of the college and a planned cycle of meetings ensures an efficient use of members' time.

24   The college received funding from the Greater Nottingham TEC for a project to investigate a consultative approach to strategic planning. The project also supported the objective of improving communications within curriculum teams and across the college. The results of the evaluation were disseminated to all Nottingham colleges. The next round of strategic planning will make use of the model for consultation which has been devised. The plan has led to course team targets being subsumed under the overall targets of the schools, thus reducing the accountability of the course teams. At present, the targets are insufficiently focused.

25   There have been several changes recently in senior management. One assistant principal left in August 1993 and has not been replaced, and the principal, in post for 20 months, resigned shortly before the inspection to take up another position. Further restructuring of the management and organisation of the college has been halted until the new principal takes up post in January 1994.

26   Under restructuring, faculty heads became assistant principals with clearly- defined functional responsibilities. The principal has temporary oversight of student services although it is not intended that this should continue. The assistant principal for curriculum has to contend with an extremely wide area of management responsibility.   There is some confusion between the roles and responsibilities of the heads of school, subject leaders and college co-ordinators where they relate to GCE, GCSE and foundation studies provision.   Responsibility for cross-college numeracy and mathematics is not clearly defined and this results in limited monitoring of mathematics needs in the curriculum areas, restricted curricular debate and lack of support for developments such as GNVQ. In other areas, including cross-curricular information technology (IT), the curriculum is well-managed. There are clearly-defined responsibilities for course team leaders, comprehensive course documentation and careful monitoring of students' progress.

27   A wide range of management information software is in use. A networked management information system services the administration, finance, the library, the work of the assistant principals and the Charnwood annex. The college's next priority is to extend the use of the network to middle managers. The management and financial reporting systems generally need to be made more relevant and user friendly. Currently, they are not used extensively to support management planning and forecasting and the base they provide for the use of performance indicators is limited. Their most effective use for academic staff is in providing accurate returns to course tutors on absences, drop-out rates and student destinations.

28   The college achieved its overall growth targets in 1993-94 although there were significant variations in the levels of recruitment for particular categories of students.   Full-time numbers were about 10 per cent below target whilst part-time non-released enrolments were almost double those predicted. In spite of achieving its overall 8 per cent target for growth, the college is likely to lose some of its demand-led income which is linked to full-time student numbers.

RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

29   Student recruitment, initial guidance, admissions and induction are managed and monitored effectively. The information provided by student services is clear and comprehensive. There is a student/college agreement which students are required to sign. All prospective full-time students are given a general interview and appropriate subject-specific guidance. Staff are issued with well-structured guidelines for the conduct of interviews.

30   The college has published policies on tutorial support and on equal opportunities. A detailed policy statement on student guidance exists in draft. All full-time students are entitled to timetabled tutorial support. The use made of records of achievement within the tutorial framework varies considerably.

31   Well-qualified and committed staff in the student services unit provide counselling for students, advice on welfare rights and careers, and language support. Students from ethnic minorities have the opportunity to work with a counsellor who is multi-lingual. There is an appropriate level of support on the main site but welfare and counselling support at Charnwood are limited. On the main site, there are also good playgroup facilities. The college has no policy document on careers but students on GCSE, GCE and BTEC programmes are particularly well supported by the careers programme.

32   There is a carefully-considered initiative to strengthen student support and guidance by linking diagnostic assessment on entry, induction, the use of records of achievement, action planning and learning support. Learning support for numeracy, communications and literacy will require further development in order to support this initiative.   Another intention of the initiative is to provide support for the assessment, development and accreditation of students' general life skills. However, the college lacks a policy for the introduction of accreditation of prior learning which would underpin such a development.

33   There are three different and separate college facilities concerned with learning support. These are the school of learning support, the learning support unit and the learning support workshop. The newly-created learning support workshop is part of student services. It is intended to serve the needs of all students but is currently perceived by many students and some staff as providing support intended only for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In working towards a coherent cross-college approach to learning support the college is also reviewing the terminology used to describe its services which is presently causing confusion.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

34   There are coherent programmes of study and routes for student progression in all the curriculum areas within the college. The counselling and induction procedures at enrolment ensure that students understand the aims and objectives of their selected courses of study. A strength of the college is the support given to students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities whose needs are assessed and comprehensively met.

35   Of 125 learning sessions inspected, 42 per cent were judged to have strengths which clearly outweighed weaknesses. The following table summarises the grades given to the sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
A/AS level		1	11	16	4	0	32
GCSE		1	14	17	1	0	33
GNVQ		0	1	1	1	0	3
NVQ		0	2	1	2	0	5
Other vocational		2	15	14	4	0	35
Other		1	5	9	2	0	17
Totals		5	48	58	14	0	125

36   In the school of learning support, in computing and IT, history, social care and access to media courses, the quality of classroom practice had strengths clearly outweighing any weaknesses. There were examples of good practice in all other curriculum areas but overall standards were not as high. Although generally satisfactory, the professional standards of work in art and design, photography and media were impaired by the quality of the accommodation inherited at incorporation. The college has plans to rectify this.

37   Most teaching and learning activities were well planned and well organised. Schemes of work were at least adequate to ensure that all the relevant topics on courses were covered. In the best schemes, the topics for each lesson were listed together with objectives, learning activities and references to books, articles and other learning supports. The discrete provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was well-managed. Individual programmes were responsive to need and interest.

38   The relations between staff and students were consistently good and this helped students' confidence and encouraged positive outcomes for learning. In the best sessions there was a variety of well-designed learning activities focused on academic and personal development. There was good support from tutors, appropriate use of high-quality teaching and learning aids and the adoption of a range of informal and formal assessment strategies. In history classes, frequent opportunities were created to develop students' oral communication, problem-solving techniques and inter-personal skills through small group activities.

39   In the few learning activities where weaknesses were predominant, the common faults lay in the degree of attention given to basic classroom organisation and practice: the structure and timing of activities, questioning techniques, the quality of the learning resources and feedback to students on their standards of work. In some business, administration and management classes, the quality of overhead transparencies and handouts was poor.

40   Students' written and practical assignments were appropriately challenging and related to course aims. In history, there is a realistic and

effective policy to mark and return students' work within two weeks and to provide constructive written comments to assist students in their learning. In a number of other courses, the timescale is negotiated with the students and is dependent on the complexity and length of the assignment. For caring courses, comprehensive documentation describes the teaching team's policy on the assessment, marking and recording of students' work. Students are made fully aware of the assessment criteria used. A clearly-documented student appeals procedure is set out in the college/student contract. It identifies the staff whom students should contact and the further action they should take if not satisfied that they have been fairly treated in the assessment of their work.

41   Assessment for BTEC courses was consistent. Clear criteria were established and helpful comments indicated how the marks were allocated. Inspectors observed a well-planned group assignment for the BTEC national diploma in computing: the final grading given for the exercise and for its subsequent presentation was the result of combined individual, peer and external assessment of the work, based on explicit criteria.

42   Assessment and marking policies for the GCE programme are varied and often ill-defined. Students gained appropriate practice in examination techniques, but much of the written work returned to them lacked constructive comments and the level of attention given to personal development and the acquisition of study skills was inconsistent. The current development of a GNVQ framework and the curriculum modularisation programme have the potential to strengthen assessment strategies.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

43   Most students in the college are well motivated by their courses of study. They receive a good start at enrolment and induction, where they are made aware of the aims and objectives of their courses of study. Enthusiasm is generated by the generally purposeful college atmosphere.

44   On the whole, students performed well in class and the work inspected was of an appropriate standard. A high level of confidence was demonstrated by BTEC students in their oral presentations. Practical activities in physics and computing were handled with a minimum of supervision, allowing students to develop greater responsibility for their work. Academic progress was generally consistent with course aims and objectives. However, the intermittent attendance of the A level students studying RSA computer literacy and information technology had resulted in slow progress towards achieving course objectives.

45   There is a sound cross-college strategy for developing students' computing and IT skills but it is not always reinforced by the staff teaching in other curriculum areas. The pilot diagnostic assessment project to assess numeracy and literacy skills has identified the need to provide support to more students than the college anticipated. Successful support will require more effective co-ordination of existing resource than presently exists.

46   There has been a continuing overall improvement in the college's vocational and GCE/GCSE examination results. In 1993, the pass rate for GCSE grades A-C was 85.7 per cent of those entered, compared with a national average of 51.3 per cent. Of the group of full-time students sitting GCSE, 81 per cent gained two or more new A-C grades. This compared with a national average of just over 50 per cent of students gaining two or more new grades at GCSE, as recorded in the Audit Commission's report, *Unfinished Business*, 1993.

47   In 1993, GCE A level pass rates, grades A-E, in physics (92 per cent) and computing (88 per cent) exceeded the national average pass rates of 80 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. In other subjects, such as art and design (39 per cent) and pure and applied mathematics (37 per cent) the pass rates were significantly below national norms. Average pass rates, grades A-E, were 71.6 per cent compared with the national average of 79.8 per cent. Tables published recently by the Department for Education show that the 120 students aged 16-18, entered for two or more A levels achieved an average point score of 9.2 (where A = 10; E = 2). The performance places the college in the middle of all institutions within the sector. A separate national pilot survey of the value added to entry qualifications by GCE A level performance indicated that students at the college are performing well. The college itself is now beginning to compare students' achievements on completing their courses with their qualifications on entry in order to determine the value added by their studies in college.

48   In 1993, the college's students in their final year of study for BTEC national or City and Guilds (C & G) national diploma achieved a 94 per cent pass rate, which puts the college in the top 25 per cent of institutions within the sector.

49   Where possible, all students in the college work towards an externally-accredited qualification. Effective use is being made of the Open College Network for accreditation in, for example, the school of learning support. Some 90 per cent of students achieve accreditation on completion of their programme of study.

50   In 1992, some 50 per cent of full-time students responded to the survey of students' destinations. Twenty-nine per cent of these progressed to higher education, 7 per cent enrolled on higher national diploma courses, 36 per cent continued in further education and 28 per cent entered employment.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

51   The college has established procedures for quality assurance. There are formal structures for annual review focused on course and cross-college team reports. Teams meet regularly during the year to monitor students' progress and to resolve administrative and curriculum matters. The system supports the college's stated mission by focusing on curriculum development and the management of the student learning experience.

52   The quality system continues to evolve in response to changes in college structure and external demands. A revised quality assurance policy includes a commitment to the internal review of quality procedures. The importance of the quality assurance function has been recognised by the consideration of the appointment of a quality assurance manager. Precise responsibility for the various aspects of the system at each level in the management structure has yet to be clearly defined. The college is now working to extend quality assurance to all aspects of college operations including the supporting services. A comprehensive set of guidelines for course review and evaluation has been issued to all teaching staff.

53   The system of course review and evaluation has been operating and evolving for two years and is familiar to all academic staff.   The effectiveness of implementation varies across the college.   The level of evaluation in some course reports is inadequate. Action planning at course and school level and responses from senior managers to issues do not always identify priorities or the dates by which targets are to be achieved.

54   Formal student involvement in the quality review process is achieved through an effective set of questionnaires, issued at various times during the academic year. These seek students' views on the quality of induction and advice, their programme of study and their end-of-year evaluation of their learning experiences.

55   There is a staff-development committee and a draft staff-development policy. The college aims to provide professional development for all staff and to promote the overall effectiveness of the college by achieving Investors In People accreditation. The entitlement to staff development for all full and part-time academic staff, governors and supporting staff has been successfully implemented. The target of ensuring that all academic staff have qualified teacher status by 1994-95 is appropriate and achievable.

56   A staff appraisal scheme has now been finalised and is to be piloted by a team working across the college. Staff development, appraisal and quality assurance are linked by the course team approach on which they are all based. It is too early to gauge the impact of these inter-relationships.

57   Staff-development funds currently available are meeting requests although funds are based on historical precedent rather than being demand led.   Staff-development activity is monitored and evaluated and participants submit written reports to the staff-development officer. There is no evidence to suggest that these reports are used to inform subsequent decisions. At present, the college does not link its staff-development programme to objectives within the strategic plan.

RESOURCES

58   South Nottingham College's unit of funding for 1992-93, inherited from the local education authority, is recorded in the FEFC report, *Funding Allocations 1993-94*, as £2,273 per weighted full-time student. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges is £2,436. Summaries of the college's estimated income and expenditure are given in figures 4 and 5. The main budget headings are agreed by the corporation. The main allocations of educational supplies and services are to heads of schools. The methods for further distribution within the schools vary.

59   The distribution of funds within the college is controlled centrally. Budget managers are provided with regular progress reports on spending. The funds allocated to teaching groups are generally sufficient for consumables and small items of equipment and there is no evidence that course teams feel they are seriously under-resourced. The basis upon which these allocations are made is not readily understood by staff who find it difficult to make forecasts to assist their planning.

60   There is sufficient specialist equipment in most areas of work and it is of a satisfactory quality. Resources for printing are good, as is the provision across the college of computer software. Areas of weakness are the limited equipment for sensory impaired students and the lack of information technology facilities on the Denton site. General provision of information technology hardware is satisfactory but much of the equipment is nearing the end of its useful life. The college should identify the upgrading of equipment as a priority. Capital equipment funds are tightly controlled centrally and teaching groups are required to bid for the limited amounts available.

61   The college relies heavily for additional funding on contracts gained from public bodies. Little income is generated from consultancy and short-course work.

62   Expenditure on course hours is controlled effectively but there are a number of small classes which are expensive to staff. It is not clear whose responsibility it is to monitor class sizes. Currently the staff budget, including non-teaching staff costs, accounts for 76 per cent of total college expenditure.

63   There are sufficient teachers for the courses offered and they have appropriate qualifications and experience. A majority of teachers is in the 30 to 50 age group. There is a balance between the genders of staff, and the number of teachers from ethnic minority groups has increased. Part-time staff form just over one-third of all staff and this proportion is growing. Non-teaching staff provide good support and their role is being appropriately enhanced to provide more effective assistance with teaching and learning. The specialist support staff are a particularly valuable asset in the school of learning support.

64   The college strategic plan appropriately identifies the improvement

of the college environment and learning facilities as one of its priority areas. Low expenditure on maintenance prior to April 1993 means that the college buildings require a considerable amount of work. There are problems with crumbling concrete exteriors and leaking flat roofs and electrical wiring and equipment need replacing.

65   The college plans to increase student numbers by 25 per cent over three years. A strategy is being developed to support this growth by extending open learning centres, increasing the use of existing accommodation and some further building. The use of space is currently being monitored.

66   Generally, the accommodation is satisfactory for its purpose. There is only a small communal area for post–16 students at West Bridgford and there is no student area at Charnwood. Much of the accommodation at West Bridgford has been successfully adapted for students with physical disabilities. At Denton some rooms are cramped for the size of classes using them although plans to upgrade the accommodation are being implemented. The Denton centre would benefit from a properly-lit path to connect it to the main site.

67   At Charnwood a new lecture theatre is being built and there is some in-filling of existing space to provide extra rooms. Some of the business accommodation is of good quality: it is spacious and well equipped, providing a pleasant and adaptable environment. The accommodation for IT is also good. Both physics laboratories have a dated image. A good suite of rooms for mathematics is being developed.

68   There are libraries at West Bridgford and Charnwood but both are small and there is restricted study space on both sites. A small, but relevant, library provision is being established at Denton. Funds are being provided for the libraries to upgrade their bookstock and to computerise the administrative systems so as to make more efficient use of the books and audio-visual resources available. The learning centre at West Bridgford is an appropriate development which supports anticipated changes in the curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

69   The college is making progress towards the achievement of its mission. The strengths of the provision inspected are:
- a range of academic and vocational courses which meets local needs
- good opportunities for students to progress from one level of study to another
- responsiveness to the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- effective operational links with the Greater Nottingham TEC, the LEA, higher education institutions, ethnic minority communities, some employers and some local schools
- the generally satisfactory and sometimes good quality of teaching

- high standards of student achievement in some areas of work including good success rates for students on their final year of study for national diplomas and at GCSE
- sound support and guidance for students
- well-established procedures for course review
- well-qualified and experienced teachers
- the successful implementation of a policy which entitles all staff to staff development.

70   In order to improve further the quality of its provision, the college should:
- complete the review of the management structure and clarify the roles and responsibilities of managers and co-ordinators
- develop the planning and forecasting functions of the computerised management information systems and extend the use of these systems
- define more closely the course-team targets within the strategic plan
- improve the internal review of quality assurance procedures
- integrate diagnostic assessment, general learning support, individual action planning and records of achievement
- develop a plan for upgrading the equipment base of the college
- improve accommodation where it has an adverse affect on the standards of work
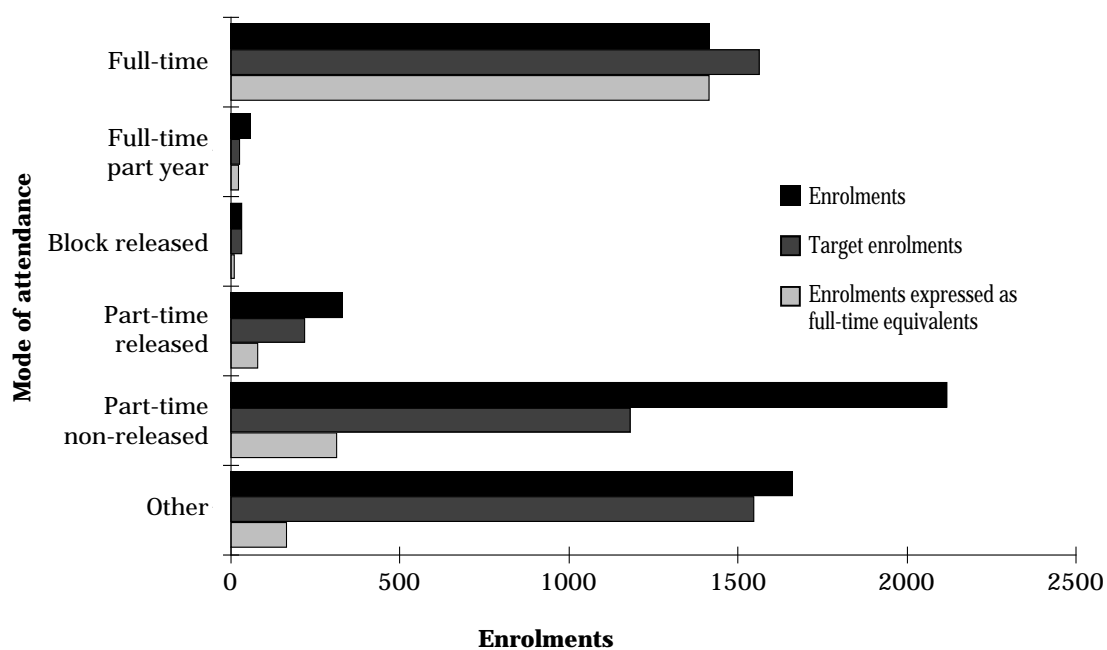- expand the range of industrial and commercial links.

FIGURES

Note: the information contained in the figures was provided by the college to the inspection team.
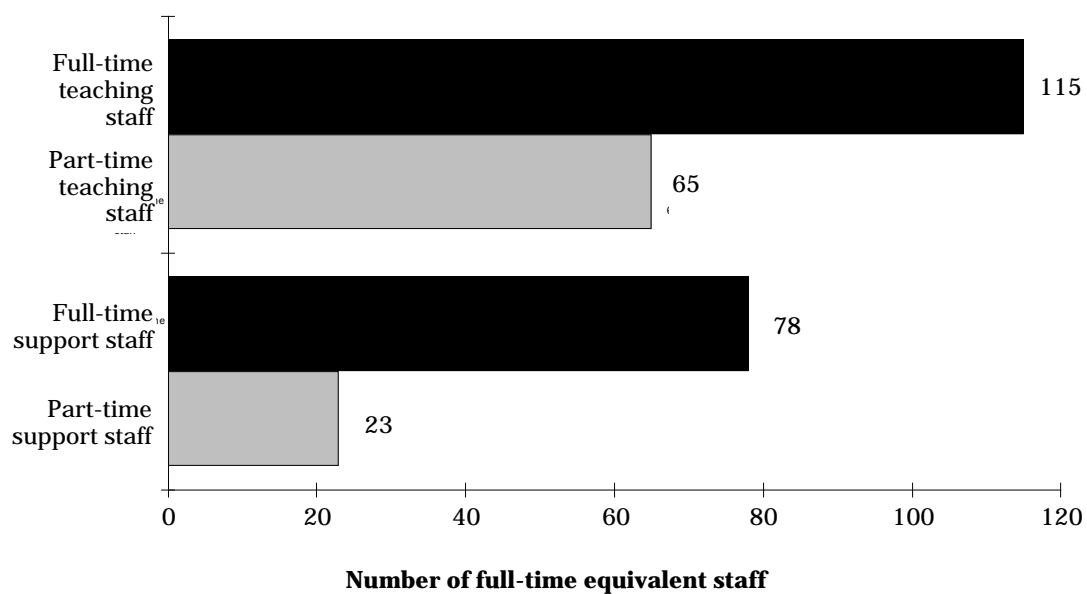
Figure 1

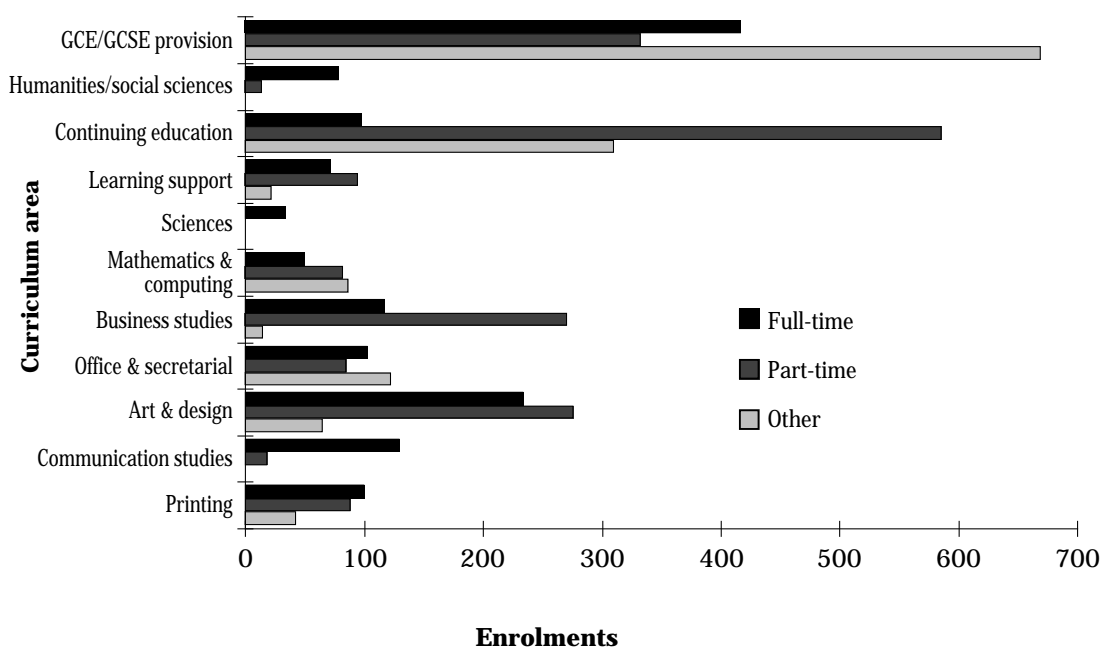**South Nottingham College: target enrolments and enrolments by mode of attendance (1993-94)**

Figure 2

South Nottingham College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1993-94)
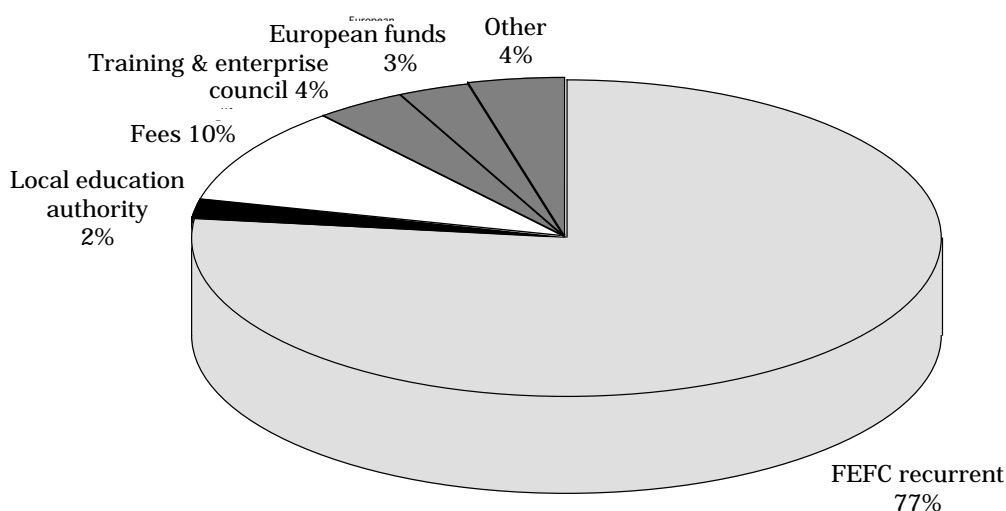
Figure 3

South Nottingham College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1993-94)

Note: GCE/GCSE enrolments are disaggregated from the school enrolments and presented separately

Figure 4

South Nottingham College: estimated recurrent income (1993-94)

Total estimated income: £8,293,693

Note: the college is also receiving a £30,000 capital allocation, a £147,000 equipment grant and a £29,000 Grant for Education Support and Training

Figure 5

South Nottingham College: estimated distribution of expenditure (1993-94)

Agency &
contracted services
1%

Premises
8%

Catering
1%

Supplies &
services 12%

Transport &
travel 1%

Miscellaneous 1%

Employees pay
76%